

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION

Information Service

VOL. III—No. 11

AUGUST 3, 1927

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Published bi-weekly by the Research Department of the FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION, 18 East 41st St., New York, N. Y.
JAMES G. McDONALD, *Chairman*; Subscription Rates: \$5.00 per year; to F. P. A. Members, \$3.00; Single Copies, 25c.

Egyptian Nationalism and British Imperial Interests

THE state visit of King Fuad I of Egypt to King George V in London, during the first week of July, may well prove to be an event terminating one period in the history of the British occupation of Egypt and initiating another. Like the years 1907, 1914 and 1922, the year 1927 seems not unlikely to mark the beginning of a period sufficiently distinct from those which have preceded it to merit separate classification.

The year 1907 marked the termination of the first, or Cromer, period in Egypt—a period devoted to the destruction of the corrupt and tyrannical rule of the Egyptian pashas*, a period in which a real attempt was made to train Egyptians for self-government and in which the fellahin, or small farmers, were liberated from the age-long oppression of their overlords. Then followed what may be called the Kitchener period, in which British officials exercised an increasingly direct control over the details of Egyptian administration. Next ensued the period of the British Protectorate from 1914 to 1922,

*The title of Pasha is attributed in Egypt to generals, governors, princes, ministers and high officials generally. British officials have frequently been given the same title.

when the Egyptian parliament did not meet and British control was even more direct and all-inclusive than before. Since 1922, when the Protectorate was abolished and Egypt was given an independent status, there has been a difficult period which may perhaps be called the period of postponement. It has been marked by the struggle of Egypt to secure a far more liberal interpretation of its post-war independence than Great Britain has yet shown itself willing to grant. A permanent settlement of Anglo-Egyptian claims, urged as an immediate necessity by both British and Egyptian moderates, has been postponed again and again because of the extreme divergence between the views of the majorities in both Great Britain and Egypt.

Not since 1922 has there been an attempt to initiate full and friendly discussion of Anglo-Egyptian problems which has seemed as promising as the present one undertaken by King Fuad and the Egyptian Prime Minister, Sarwat Pasha. But even now it will be realized that the path of negotiation is strewn with difficulties, and that an agree-

ment covering all outstanding disputes is hardly expected. The irritations growing out of the long period of postponement are too recent and too deeply felt to admit of ready settlement.

EGYPT FAILS TO OUST BRITISH SIRDAR

The most recent of these irritations arose as lately as in June of this year in connection with the status of the Egyptian army. A Parliamentary Committee appointed to study the War Budget delivered a provocative report on May 23 before the Chamber of Deputies in Cairo. The burden of the report was that the efficiency of the Egyptian army must be increased, a detailed program to that end being suggested. It also recommended—and here the complications had their origin—that Egypt withdraw the customary appropriation for the use of the British Inspector-General of the Egyptian army and that it cease to pay an annual grant of £E750,000* to the Sudan administration.

These two recommendations were far more than an attempt at economy. The latter was a gesture of impatience at the passive rôle Egypt was forced to assume in the Anglo-Egyptian administration of the Sudan.† The former was viewed by the British as a hostile attempt to transfer to an anti-British Minister of War the control of the Egyptian army which for the past half-century had been vested in a British military officer.

The Egyptian army, under its British Sirdar, or Commander-in-Chief, is distinct from the British force of a few thousand men stationed near Cairo under the control of the British High Commissioner. These, together with the air force, are maintained in Egypt at Great Britain's expense, solely to safeguard imperial communications and foreign life and property and to serve as a nucleus of defence in case of a foreign attack on Egypt.

*The Egyptian pound is equivalent to £1, 6½d. in English money, or \$5.00 in American money.

†An Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was established in the Sudan in 1899, by the terms of which Egypt enjoyed a limited share in the government of that country in recognition of its special interests on the Upper Nile and of its aid in the military conquest. For a further account see p. 161.

The Egyptian army is maintained by the Egyptian Government for purposes of internal defence. It has been rapidly increasing in size, having more than doubled its strength in the period between 1922 and 1926. A substantial fraction of these Egyptian troops have seen service at one time in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and are now in Egypt only because they were expelled from the Sudan for engaging there in anti-British activities which culminated in the open mutinies of 1924.

While the strength of the Egyptian army has rapidly increased, the authority of its British Commander-in-Chief has gradually been curtailed at the instigation of the Egyptian Cabinet. This tendency has been evident, for example, in the matter of appointments and promotions, over which the Minister of War has been exercising an increasing influence. This is the explanation given for the phenomenon that anti-British elements in the Egyptian army have increased ever since the arrival of the troops expelled from the Sudan, and for the fact that newly-appointed Egyptian officers frequently range themselves in political questions on the side which opposes British policy.

Meanwhile the British element among the officers has been rapidly reduced. In 1922 the total number of British officers in the Egyptian army was 172. Four years later only nine were left. Until November, 1924, the Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian army was the British Governor-General of the Sudan. After the assassination of Sir Lee Stack, however, that arrangement was discontinued. Up to the present no Sirdar has been appointed to take Sir Lee's place. Instead, Spinks Pasha, a British officer who is technically Inspector-General of the Egyptian Army, has been performing the duties of Sirdar with an attenuated staff.

Thus, when the Parliamentary War Committee recommended cancellation of the usual credit for the Sirdarate, it was carrying to its logical conclusion a recognized policy of the Egyptian Nationalists. But it was a step the British authorities would not permit the Egyptian Government to take, since it was a blow at the last vestige of di-

rect control Great Britain exercised over the Egyptian army. Accordingly, six days after the report was presented, the British Government dispatched three warships to Egyptian waters and delivered a note to the Egyptian Government, pointing out that the control of the Egyptian army was a question which touched closely the interests of both Egypt and Great Britain and ought to be settled by mutual agreement. Pending a settlement, Great Britain would insist upon maintaining safeguards which past experience had shown to be effective. To this end the British Inspector-General's contract must be renewed for a term of three years, with adequate salary and staff, and attempts to reduce his authority must be abandoned. In particular he must be permitted to present his recommendations for appointments, promotions and dismissals to the King directly rather than through the Minister of War as at present. Great Britain, the note declared, was not opposed to Egyptian army reform. But whatever was undertaken must be carried out with British assistance.

Although at first the Egyptian Government maintained that the British proposal was derogatory to Egyptian sovereignty and parliamentary authority and was beyond the constitutional powers of the Cabinet to grant, in the end, after a great deal of conferring, Egyptian leaders capitulated and furnished the required guarantee of cooperation between Egyptian and British forces and subscribed to the principle that the Egyptian army should be kept free from political influence, withdrawing the proposal to cancel the credit for the Sirdarate.

BRITISH CLAIMS IRRITATE EGYPTIANS

But the question as to who shall control the Egyptian army is only a single item in a long series of hitherto unadjusted Anglo-Egyptian difficulties. The range of the questions which claim attention was indicated five years ago in a British declaration communicated to the Egyptian Government. The questions comprise all matters affecting the safety of British imperial communications, the defence of the country against all foreign interference, direct or indirect, the protec-

tion of minorities and the whole question of how the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan is to be administered.

It was inevitable that the non-settlement of the numerous questions falling within these general categories should have been a source of continual irritation during the past five years to the Egyptian Government as well as to the British authorities. The reservations have constituted a heavy limitation on the nominal independence of Egypt. They have been resented by Egyptian Nationalists, who have made no secret of their intention to reduce British influence in Egypt to a minimum. Situations of extraordinary difficulty for both the Egyptian and the British authorities have arisen in consequence, and mutual distrust has fed on incidents to which the continual friction has from time to time given rise.

To understand the development of Anglo-Egyptian relations it is first of all necessary to appreciate the reason for Great Britain's persistent concern in Egyptian affairs, which has as its focal point the safety of the Suez Canal. Why the safety of that canal should motivate British foreign policy to as great a degree as it does was explained by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald when, as Prime Minister, he wrote in an official dispatch to the High Commissioner in Egypt that the foundation on which the entire defensive strategy of the British Empire rested was an absolute certainty that the Suez Canal would remain open in peace as well as in war for the free passage of British ships. Mr. MacDonald went on to remark that in 1914 the former arrangement for the free navigation of the canal was demonstrated to be ineffective. As a result Great Britain had at that time been forced to take steps on its own account to ensure that the canal would remain open. In the light of that experience, he added, no British Government could divest itself wholly, even in favor of an ally, of its interest in guarding such a vital link in British communications.

Of subsidiary British interests in Egypt there have been many. The number of British merchants engaged in the Egyptian cotton trade is large, and a very substantial amount of British capital is invested in the

country. Moreover, as the Suez has become important to British steamship navigation, so with the development of aerial navigation Cairo is becoming an important point in the British airways system. Already there is regular commercial air service from London to Cairo, from Cairo to Karachi, India, and from Cairo to British East Africa, while an air-line from Cairo to Cape Town is now under preparation. Finally, since the Sudan is becoming increasingly important as a source of raw materials for British manufacturers it is important to keep the Egyptian line of communication up the Nile Valley open to British trade.

BRITISH "TEMPORARY OCCUPATION" PROLONGED

The British occupation of Egypt began in 1882 when Great Britain intervened to suppress disorders accompanying the rebellion of Arabi Pasha against Turkey. Other European powers, invited by Great Britain to participate in putting down the revolt, declined to do so. Thus it was a British, rather than an international force, which remained in possession after order was restored.

This occupation, and the subsequent purchase of a controlling share in the Suez Canal, gave Great Britain a hold on Egypt which has never been altogether relaxed since. For in spite of the fact that Great Britain negotiated with the Turkish Sultan in 1887 for the termination of the British occupation of Egypt, the agreement never went into effect. One of its provisions was to have been that Great Britain should have the right of reoccupying the country if a new danger, external or internal, arose. Other European powers, to whom this clause was obnoxious, exerted enough pressure upon the Sultan to prevent him from adding his signature to the agreement after it had been negotiated. Accordingly, Great Britain did not withdraw.

It was a somewhat anomalous position which Great Britain occupied in Egypt from that time until 1914. Nominally an autonomous section of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt was governed in theory by a Khedive who

owed fealty to the Turkish Sultan. Nominally, also, the British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt was only one of several foreign diplomatic representatives of equal rank. But in practice it was the British Agent and Consul-General who controlled the administration of the country. Under his general supervision were appointed British advisers to assist Egyptian ministers and departmental heads. British inspectors toured the provinces and observed and reported on the practical results of new administrative methods.

With the entry of Turkey into the war on the side of the Central Powers in the fall of 1914 the anomalous character of Britain's position in Egypt was modified. Virtually in control in Egypt, Great Britain did not propose to turn so valuable a territory over to its nominal suzerain, the Sultan of Turkey. Thus, faced with the alternative of annexing Egypt outright to the British Empire or of proclaiming a British Protectorate over it, the British authorities adopted the latter course. The British Foreign Minister proclaimed the termination of Turkish suzerainty and announced that Great Britain would adopt all measures necessary for the defence of Egypt and of its inhabitants and their interests.

Undertaken as a war measure, and primarily for the greater security it would afford Great Britain during the war, the British Protectorate was also of direct advantage to Egypt itself in a number of ways. It prevented the country from becoming one of the theatres of war and therefore from devastation and incalculable material losses. Financially, Egypt emerged from the war period better off than its neighbors. Its public debt had not increased, nor had its rates of taxation gone up. Meanwhile its trade had more than doubled.

This is not equivalent, however, to saying that Egyptians generally were pleased by the British war-time occupation of their country. As a matter of fact, as subsequent events were to show, a large majority of Egyptians, believing that the Protectorate was a war-time expedient only, anticipated that it would not outlive the war, and were bitter in their denunciation of Great Britain

when they discovered their mistake. To a considerable degree the present Anglo-Egyptian misunderstandings are directly traceable to that single cause. It is, therefore, worth while to consider at this point the factors which contributed to the agitations for the abolition of the Protectorate.

WAR-TIME GROWTH OF EGYPTIAN NATIONALISM

Thanks to the Cromer régime and to the effects of western education and ideas upon the minds of a great number of Egyptians, the Egypt of 1919 differed from the Egypt of 1882 not only in the degree of its prosperity, but also in its capacity and desire for self-government. In less than forty years the nationalist idea had taken root and grown to unexpected proportions, at the same time that an unprecedentedly large number of Egyptians had been receiving practical training in the technique of public administration.

Progressing rapidly enough even before the war, Egyptian nationalism received a strong fillip between 1914 and 1918 through irritations attendant upon the war-time occupation. After General Allenby had pushed his front lines northeastward into Palestine and the fighting was no longer on their own soil, Egyptians began to show a certain restiveness under demands for labor and supplies. Wholesale requisitioning of camels and donkeys for army transport service took place in 1917. In 1918, a Supplies Control Board requisitioned food and fodder. The only classes of the population who took such requisitions philosophically as the necessary price to be paid for immunity from conscription were the town-dwellers whose own property was not requisitioned.

Moreover, by this time hardships in service and delays in repatriation of Egyptian contract laborers had caused a falling off in the number of Egyptian workers who presented themselves voluntarily to the British authorities for employment in the Labor Corps. In spite of a former promise that Egyptians would not be conscripted, the British authorities now proposed to have recourse to an Egyptian Conscription Law to

fill the depleted ranks of the Labor Corps. The Egyptian authorities refused to permit this, but adopted instead a method of recruiting labor which caused probably greater dissatisfaction than conscription itself would have done. Village leaders were instructed to raise a specified quota of labor recruits from their own districts. The process of selection was left to local discretion, with the result that persons who by reason of friendship or bribery enjoyed the favor of a village leader were left unmolested, while their personal enemies were sent in as labor recruits. Local feuds and dislike of the British authorities were intensified in the process.

There were other incidents that increased Egyptian disaffection, such as the disarming of the entire population, and the permanent requisitioning for an air base at Abukir of land which the owners did not wish to sell except at exorbitant prices because of the rapidly rising value of their property. Another cause of discontent had to do with an unfortunate misunderstanding of the nature of a Red Cross appeal. A request for voluntary contributions was interpreted as a demand for specified amounts from each village, and the fellahin paid grudgingly and with resentment.

By the time the armistice was concluded, Egyptian leaders were resolved to secure immediate autonomy for Egypt and abolition of the Protectorate. They judged that the irritations of the war period had evoked a degree of nationalist feeling throughout the country strong enough to be turned to good account if Great Britain refused to relinquish its war-time hold upon the country.

When British home authorities brushed aside the Egyptian request for autonomy without so much as permitting the leaders an audience, there developed not an autonomist but an independence movement in Egypt, and the agents of Zaghlul Pasha, the outstanding Nationalist leader, went up and down the country organizing opposition to the British authority. The response was so ready that when Zaghlul Pasha was deported to Malta as punishment for anti-British activities a little later, there was an immediate

outburst of violence throughout Egypt, with riots, organized destruction of railways, irrigation works, telephones, telegraphs and foreign property, while strikes disorganized the life of the cities and a number of Englishmen were murdered. General Allenby was sent out as British High Commissioner to restore order. But still, in accordance with Lord Curzon's policy, the Protectorate was maintained. Some months later, after order had been restored, there arrived from Great Britain a Commission under the chairmanship of Lord Milner, appointed "to inquire into the causes of the late disorders in Egypt and to report on the existing situation in the country and the form of the constitution which, under the Protectorate, will be best calculated to promote its peace and prosperity, the progressive development of self-governing institutions and the protection of foreign interests."

The assumption of these terms of reference that the Protectorate would in any case be continued earned for the Commission the animosity of Egyptians. During its stay it received only twenty-nine messages of welcome as against one thousand, one hundred and thirty-one messages of ill-will. Its investigations were hampered by an effective boycott. Students picketed the headquarters of the Commission and reported to a vigorous and hostile press the names of all Egyptians who called on it. In country districts people were dissuaded from entering into relations with its members.

NEGOTIATIONS PROVE FUTILE

Zaghlul Pasha, released from Malta, and Adly Pasha Yeghen, the leader of the Egyptian Moderates, eventually went to London and spent a few months of the summer and fall of 1920 discussing with Lord Milner and the members of his Commission the Memorandum the latter had drafted to embody their proposals for the future government of Egypt. Later, in 1921, Adly Pasha Yeghen entered into long negotiations with Lord Curzon in London concerning the terms of a proposed treaty to regulate Anglo-Egyptian relations. But in the end neither the Memorandum of the Milner Commission nor

Lord Curzon's draft treaty were agreed to by the Egyptians.*

The report of the Milner Commission discussed with a considerable degree of sympathy the causes of discontent in Egypt. It submitted the conclusion that since Egypt had never been part of the British Empire and since Egyptians have always understood their special position to be equivalent to a promise of complete independence, no settlement that disregarded Egypt's claims to nationhood and no settlement that was simply imposed by Great Britain upon Egypt would be satisfactory. It would be wiser to seek a solution by means of a treaty between the two countries.

But Egyptian leaders disagreed with the findings of the Milner Commission in three points. In the first place, although it provided for recognition of the independence of Egypt under a constitutional monarch, there was no promise that the Protectorate would first be abolished. In the second place it gave to British Financial and Judicial Advisers in Egypt a greater degree of control than Egyptian Nationalists were willing to entrust to them. In the third place, the validity of the entire arrangement was made contingent upon other foreign powers transferring their extraterritorial rights to Great Britain—a condition which might not be fulfilled for an indefinite length of time.

While from the Egyptian point of view the draft treaty of 1921 was an improvement on the Milner Memorandum in one respect, in that it contained a definite promise that the Protectorate would be abolished, Adly Pasha objected to it persistently because of the clause which would have given to British military forces free passage through Egypt and the right to be maintained at such places in Egypt and for such periods as should from time to time be determined. Adly Pasha maintained that to introduce a potentially unlimited military occupation of this sort by Great Britain was tantamount to perpetuating the Protectorate itself. He also objected to the proposed treaty because it did not recognize Egypt's claims to sovereignty over the Sudan, its claim to the right

*For text of these documents see Annexes I and II, p. 165. ff.

to administer its own foreign affairs, or its claim to freedom from British interference in the Departments of Finance and Justice.

Thus, at the close of 1921, after three years of fruitless effort, Anglo-Egyptian differences seemed no nearer a solution than they had been when the first demand for autonomy was heard at the close of the war.

PROTECTORATE ABOLISHED BY DECLARATION OF 1922

General Allenby meanwhile had been warning Lord Curzon repeatedly that the only alternative to annexing Egypt by force of arms was to grant it complete independence and to do so speedily. He found that British inflexibility in the matter of abolishing the Protectorate before a complete settlement had been made was provoking an unreasoning hostility in Egypt, which might at any moment have grave consequences, and which, furthermore, would make subsequent adjustment an impossibility.

The storm he had foreseen broke when Adly Pasha returned from London empty-handed in December, 1921. There was an outburst of vindictive political activity, with strikes, a boycott and violent anti-British propaganda. Once more Zaghlul Pasha was sent into exile. Once more in his absence disorders increased rather than diminished.

At this point General Allenby went to London and persuaded Lloyd George, Winston Churchill and even Lord Curzon that the termination of the Protectorate must be delayed no longer. Accordingly a new status was accorded Egypt by unilateral declaration on February 28, 1922. The text of the Declaration was as follows:

"Whereas His Majesty's Government, in accordance with their declared intentions, desire forthwith to recognise Egypt as an independent sovereign State, and

"Whereas the relations between His Majesty's Government and Egypt are of vital interest to the British Empire:

"The following principles are hereby declared:

- "1. The British Protectorate over Egypt is terminated, and Egypt is declared to be an independent sovereign State.
- "2. So soon as the Government of His Highness shall pass an Act of Indemnity with applica-

tion to all inhabitants of Egypt, martial law as proclaimed on November 2, 1914, shall be withdrawn.

"3. The following matters are absolutely reserved to the discretion of His Majesty's Government until such time as it may be possible by free discussion and friendly accommodation on both sides to conclude agreements in regard thereto between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Egypt:

- (a) The security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt;
- (b) The defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference direct or indirect;
- (c) The protection of foreign interests in Egypt and the protection of minorities;
- (d) The Sudan.

"Pending the conclusion of such agreements, the *status quo* in all these matters shall remain intact."

Messages were sent to the British Dominions, and later to the governments of foreign powers explaining that the termination of the British Protectorate over Egypt involved no change in the status of other foreign powers in Egypt. But they were warned that Great Britain would admit no questioning of its own special relations with Egypt, and that it would regard as an unfriendly act any attempt by another power to interfere in the affairs of Egypt. It would repel by all means at its command any aggression against Egyptian territory.

The Declaration of February, 1922, came too late to have any effect on extreme Nationalists in Egypt. Moderates were willing to make an attempt at cooperation with Great Britain on the new basis, but Zaghlulists denounced the Declaration as a hypocritical attempt to retain the very Protectorate it assumed to abolish. Great Britain's note to the foreign powers would make it impossible for Egypt to develop a normal foreign policy. The retention of British troops on the Suez Canal and along the line of Nile communications the Zaghlulists no longer admitted as a necessity. They resented the British claim of the right to protect foreigners and minorities in Egypt. They wished to be able to call the Sudan an Egyptian colony, and advocated the drastic reduction if not the termination of British control there.

It was the prevalence of this temper among extremists that explained the series

of crimes which followed against British officers, soldiers and officials, even after the second release of Zaghlul Pasha, until in July the Egyptian Government was warned that Great Britain would be compelled to reconsider its attitude to Egypt unless such outrages ceased.

DISORDERS CONTINUE AFTER DECLARATION

The bare outlines of subsequent political developments in Egypt may be rapidly traced. During 1923 a constitution was evolved and martial law abolished. In January, 1924, a new parliament was elected after an interregnum of ten years without representative institutions. Great Britain did not attempt to settle the problem of the reserved points with this first government, for the Zaghlulist majority in the Chamber of Deputies was not prepared to negotiate except on a basis of complete independence for Egypt and British withdrawal from the Sudan, where an anti-British campaign of propaganda, fostered by Egyptian Nationalists, was in full swing. Zaghlul Pasha, the new Prime Minister, went to London, indeed, and placed his views before Mr. Ramsay MacDonald; but the latter intimated that Zaghlul Pasha's position made negotiation impossible, and their brief conversations ended without result.

In November, 1924, about a month after Zaghlul Pasha's return to Egypt, there occurred in Cairo the assassination of Sir Lee Stack, Sirdar of the Egyptian army and Governor-General of the Sudan. It was the culminating event in a series of disorders in both the Sudan and Egypt. Zaghlul Pasha's government disclaimed all connection with the crime, but British authorities held the Prime Minister ultimately responsible because of his anti-British propaganda in general and in particular because of the public statement he had made that it was inconsistent with the dignity of an independent Egypt that a foreign officer should be Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian army.

The affair was made the occasion for sending a strongly-worded ultimatum to Egypt, demanding an ample apology, the severe punishment of the criminals, the suppression of

all popular political demonstrations, the immediate payment of an indemnity of £500,000, withdrawal of opposition to the wishes of the British Government concerning the protection of foreign interests in Egypt* and the immediate withdrawal of Egyptian officers and troops from the Sudan. The ultimatum announced that the Gezireh irrigation area in the Sudan on the Upper Nile would be increased from 300,000 acres to an unlimited extent as need might arise.

After Egypt had promised to meet the first four demands, British troops occupied the Customs House at Alexandria to force upon it a more complete submission. Zaghlul Pasha thereupon resigned and was succeeded by Ziwar Pasha, Anglophile leader of the Unionist Party. The new Prime Minister secured a reconsideration of the announced extension of the Gezireh irrigation area and modification of the power of the Judicial and Financial Advisers.

Meanwhile the Nationalist parliament had appealed to the League of Nations against the British ultimatum. But the League Council, in the face of Mr. Austen Chamberlain's warning that Great Britain considered the subject a matter of purely domestic concern, took no action on the appeal.

The next election in March, 1925, was an expression of defiance toward Great Britain. It resulted in a large Nationalist majority. The King, acting under instructions from the British High Commissioner, dissolved parliament the day it assembled, and Ziwar Pasha continued to govern until June, 1926, without its aid. Again in 1926 an overwhelmingly Nationalist parliament was returned. This time it was permitted to function, but only under the leadership of the moderate Adly Pasha. Although at one stage in post-election discussions Zaghlul Pasha had every intention of assuming office, he was prevented by British influence from doing so lest there should be a recurrence of the outbreaks which had occurred during his former term of office.

The new Nationalist parliament entered upon its career with moderation. But as

*This had reference especially to the functions of the British Financial and Judicial Advisers, for which see Draft Convention, Articles 12 to 16, Annex II, p. 167.

time went on its members began to exert on the Prime Minister more and more pressure to challenge British authority in Egypt. Finally, in April, 1927, Adly Pasha resigned from an increasingly difficult position. It was under his successor, Sarwat Pasha, the Liberal leader, at a time when Great Britain was preoccupied with Russian and Chinese affairs, that the recent attempt was made to oust the British Inspector-General of the Egyptian army.

That the attempt failed was not an indication of a change of heart on the part of the Egyptian Parliament. It was an indication rather of Egypt's unwilling sense of helplessness in the face of the far-reaching reservations of February, 1922.

King Fuad's visit to London, in spite of the fact that he was accompanied by Sarwat Pasha, the Prime Minister, was not for the purpose of negotiating an immediate, permanent agreement on the reserved points. It was planned rather for the sake of a preliminary understanding of the general outlines of such an agreement.

Each of the reservations involves such a wide variety of general and particular difficulties that none of them can be fully discussed in a study as brief as this. A few of their implications are suggested in the pages which follow. But for a more complete view of the situation the reader should consult the works of reference listed below.

EGYPT ASSERTS SUDAN INTERESTS

In considering here the problems involved in any Anglo-Egyptian settlement, the last of them—that which relates to the Sudan—may conveniently be discussed first. Egypt, since the war, has been preoccupied, almost to the point of obsession, with the desire to secure a reversal of British and Egyptian rôles in the administration of the Sudan Condominium. Such a reversal would not only be flattering to Egyptian national ambitions, but would ease Egyptian anxiety with reference to the Nile water supply. Writers who have ridiculed the uneasiness of Egyptians at

the spectacle of their own diminishing power in the Sudan, have pointed out that Great Britain could not contemplate the diversion of an unfair amount of Nile water for Sudan irrigation for the obvious reason that important British agricultural and mercantile interests in Egypt would be among the first to suffer from such a policy.

But Egyptian Nationalists have pointed to the British ultimatum of November, 1924, for justification of their alarm. The statement that Great Britain would extend one of the Sudan irrigation areas at pleasure came only a month after Ramsay MacDonald had said that the British Government was always prepared to secure Egypt's interests in the Sudan and a fair share of Nile water in a way satisfactory to Egypt itself.* The fact that this portion of the ultimatum was subsequently repudiated by Great Britain did not alter the fact that in a critical moment it had used its control of the Upper Nile as a goad to force Egypt along an undesired path.

It was significant that one of the first achievements of the Nationalist parliament of 1926 was to ratify an agreement with Great Britain regulating the amount of water which might legitimately be diverted from the Nile for Sudan irrigation.

But there still remained the vexed question of what share Egypt should enjoy in the administration of the Sudan itself. An illustration of Nationalist intentions in this respect was seen when the draft constitution of Egypt was under preparation in 1923. One of its clauses was made to provide that Egypt should itself control the Sudan. Even among so-called Moderates indignation ran high when the British authorities forced the deletion of this article.

The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was established in the Sudan in 1899. Three decades earlier Egypt had colonized the Sudan but subsequently lost it during the Mahdist rebellion. In the second conquest Egyptians collaborated with British forces, the latter taking the initiative in the

*See also Lord Curzon's proposal for regulating the Nile water supply, Annex II, last paragraph of Article 17, p. 168.

campaign. When Egypt was given a share in the Condominium it was in recognition both of fundamental Egyptian interests in the Sudan and of Egyptian participation in the second conquest. But in practice Egyptian participation in the Sudan administration has had its limitations. It has been confined chiefly to providing a portion of the occupying army and to bearing a part of the expenses of the administration, while general policies and their execution have been in British hands. Whether in the approaching negotiations Egyptian Nationalists will demand an equal share of responsibility with Great Britain, or whether they will acquiesce in the British view that they should be satisfied with a share more commensurate with Egyptian investments in the Sudan it is naturally too early to prophesy.

MEASURES TO MAINTAIN BRITISH OFFICIALS

In relation to the third British reservation of 1922, referring to the interests of foreigners and the rights of minorities, two specific problems may be considered here—viz., protection of the interests of British officials whose terms of service have not yet expired and the proposal to modify the extraterritorial rights of foreign merchants residing in Egypt.

In regard to the position of British officials in Egypt, it has already been seen that under the Cromer régime they were confined to advisers and assistants and that their number was restricted. But as the volume of public business grew and the Cromer régime became a thing of the past, the ratio of British appointments rose rapidly. British officials enjoyed higher rates of pay than Egyptians. Egyptian officials were excluded from most of the highest positions which were reserved for Englishmen, who lived in a community apart and who conducted the work of their departments with less and less reference to the Egyptian Council of Ministers.

This situation, aggravated during the war, was fundamentally changed after the Declaration of February 28, 1922. After

some negotiating it was at first agreed that British officials who did not wish to continue in the Egyptian service after the termination of the Protectorate, or British officials with whose services the Egyptian Government wished to dispense, might be retired on payment of pension, compensation for loss of position and a repatriation allowance. In 1923, it was further agreed that until April 1, 1927, British officials might exercise the option of retiring under this arrangement, and that after that date the Egyptian Government would be empowered to exercise its power of dismissal.

There was a steady exodus of British officials from Egypt after the termination of the Protectorate and a corresponding increase in the number of Egyptians appointed to positions of control. From two departments of the administration, however, there was no British exodus. These were the Departments of Communications and the Interior, where British officials were retained in sufficient numbers to guarantee imperial communications and the rights of foreigners. Railways, telegraphs, telephones, ports and lights and police control in the cities were still controlled by British officials pending a permanent agreement.

The Financial and Judicial Advisers mentioned in the British ultimatum of November, 1924, have continued in office retaining their British staffs. The Financial Adviser is responsible for the punctual payment of charges for foreign services such as the upkeep of the Mixed Courts and the payment of pensions. He also advises the Ministry of Finance in any question concerning foreign loans. It is the Judicial Adviser's duty, meanwhile, to watch the administration of the law in all matters affecting foreigners and to give advice on questions of law enforcement.

Because the number of Europeans of all professions residing in Egypt is exceptionally large, the question of their status is particularly pressing. Article 154 of the Egyptian constitution provides that "the application of the present constitution must in no way affect the obligations of Egypt

to foreign states, nor the rights that strangers have acquired in Egypt by virtue of laws, treaties or acknowledged customs."

GREAT BRITAIN SEEKS TO MODIFY CAPITULATIONS

Among other things the result of this article has been to maintain the *status quo* in Egypt with respect to the capitulations. Thanks to privileges granted by the Sultan of Turkey, fourteen European powers and the United States long enjoyed capitulatory rights in Egypt whereby their nationals received exemption from courts of local jurisdiction and immunity from personal taxation and compliance with purely Egyptian law, except when such taxation or law had been approved by their own home government. Furthermore the capitulations granted foreigners certain commercial privileges, inviolability of domicile, and immunity from arrest.

To Egyptian Nationalists the cumbersome character of the arrangement was less irritating than the limitation it placed upon Egyptian sovereignty. But Egyptians and British alike were concerned by its harmful effect also upon the economic life of the country*—an effect described by the Egyptian delegate to the International Economic Conference held at Geneva last May. He pointed out that nationals of capitulatory powers were immune from all forms of direct taxation except from taxes on land and house property. It would in practice require the unanimous consent of these powers to secure any extension of direct taxation of their nationals. It was practically impossible, he added, for the Egyptian Government to levy an income tax upon its own citizens and upon the nationals of non-capitulatory powers, as long as other well-to-do foreigners would be immune from such taxation. Thus Egypt finds it difficult to meet its rapidly-growing budget, since frequent tampering with the tariff cannot but be harmful to Egyptian trade, and since, in any case, an 8 per cent *ad valorem* duty is the highest that its agreements with certain powers have permitted it to impose.

When the Milner Memorandum indi-

cated that Great Britain would attempt to persuade the other capitulatory powers to transfer their special rights to itself, it was for the purpose of substituting one outside authority for the original fifteen, and of simplifying by that much Egypt's very real fiscal difficulties. There has been no apparent eagerness, however, on the part of other foreigners to renounce their capitulatory rights in Great Britain's favor.

FORESTALLING FOREIGN INTRIGUE

The British authorities, for their part, were sensible of a gradually increasing interest manifested by various European nations in the future possibilities of Egypt. When in its second reservation the British Government claimed the right to defend Egypt "against all foreign aggression or interference, direct or indirect," it was to prevent any European power from using a temporary alliance with Egyptian Nationalists as a wedge to introduce its own at the expense of British influence in Egypt. With the spectacle of Arabic-speaking peoples in Tripoli on the west and in Syria on the northeast engaged in armed conflicts to win autonomy from Italy and France respectively, Egyptian Nationalists might be expected to shun an alliance with any European Power. The second British reservation was intended, however, to dispel any temptations of this sort which, in spite of the difficulties of their neighbors, might conceivably offer themselves to Egyptian Nationalists.

BRITISH INTERESTS MENACED BY MUTUAL DISTRUST

The problem of preserving the security of imperial communications in Egypt—the first and most important of the reserved points—is in reality the beginning and the end of the British occupation of Egypt. For that is the consideration on which all others hinge. The security and integrity of Egypt, its good government, its prosperity—things which to the Egyptian are ends in themselves—are to the mind of every British Foreign Minister a means of guaranteeing one of the important requirements of the

*See Milner, Memorandum, Article 7. Annex I. p. 166.

British Empire. Frequently enough, especially during the post-war period, Great Britain has had to meet charges of cupidity and bad faith from its Nationalist opponents in Egypt. Frequently enough the British retort has been a warm charge of ingratitude for the obvious benefits the British occupation has brought to Egypt. Acts of violence on the one side and of repression on the other have grown out of these mutual recriminations. Both have delayed the progress of Egypt toward the realization of even that degree of independence which was guaranteed to it when the Protectorate was abolished in 1922. Both have helped to postpone indefinitely the mutual confidence which, if it existed, would constitute one of the best single guarantees of security to British imperial communications in Egypt.

When, on July 4, King George proposed a toast to his guest, King Fuad, at a State banquet, amid all the courtesies of his speech it was significant that he mentioned

the deep concern Great Britain must always feel in the ordered progress of Egypt, but failed entirely to mention the independence Egypt desired or even the independence it theoretically enjoyed. King Fuad, in replying, referred to the era of Egyptian independence as if it were an established certainty but failed to make any reference to Great Britain's special interests in the country.

With British and Egyptian sentiment thus grown poles apart it will be a matter of utmost difficulty to negotiate agreements on the reserved points. But the present moment is probably less unpropitious than former occasions, since the Nationalist Government now in power has a record behind it of a year without any violent outbreaks in the country and since British authorities are growing increasingly anxious to secure a settlement which it will be to the advantage of both countries to expedite.

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ANNEX I

THE MILNER MEMORANDUM OF AUGUST 18, 1920

1. In order to establish the independent of Egypt on a secure and lasting basis, it is necessary that the relations between Great Britain and Egypt should be precisely defined, and the privileges and immunities now enjoyed in Egypt by the capitulatory Powers should be modified and rendered less injurious to the interests of the country.

2. These ends cannot be achieved without further negotiations between accredited representatives of the British and Egyptian Governments respectively in the one case, and between the British Government and the Governments of the capitulatory Powers in the other case. Such negotiations will be directed to arriving at definite agreements on the following lines:

3. (i) As between Egypt and Great Britain a Treaty will be entered into, under which Great Britain will recognize the independence of Egypt as a constitutional monarchy with representative institutions, and Egypt will confer upon Great Britain such rights as are necessary to safeguard her special interests and to enable her to furnish the guarantees which must be given to foreign Powers to secure the relinquishment of their capitulatory rights.

(ii) By the same Treaty, an alliance will be concluded between Great Britain and Egypt, by which Great Britain will undertake to support Egypt in defending the integrity of her territory, and Egypt will undertake, in case of war, even when the integrity of Egypt is not effected, to render to Great Britain all the assistance in her power, within her own borders, including the use of her harbours, aerodromes and means of communication for military purposes.

4. This Treaty will embody stipulations to the following effect:

(i) Egypt will enjoy the right to representation in foreign countries. In the absence of any duly-accredited Egyptian representative, the Egyptian Government will confide its interests to the care of the British representative. Egypt will undertake not to adopt in foreign countries an attitude which is inconsistent with the alliance or will create difficulties for Great Britain, and will also undertake not to enter into any agreement with a foreign Power which is prejudicial to British interests.

(ii) Egypt will confer on Great Britain the right to maintain a military force on Egyptian soil for the protection of her Imperial communications. The Treaty will fix the place where the force shall be quartered and will regulate any subsidiary matters which require to be arranged. The presence of

this force shall not constitute in any manner a military occupation of the country, or prejudice the rights of the Government of Egypt.

(iii) Egypt will appoint, in concurrence with His Majesty's Government, a Financial Adviser, to whom shall be entrusted in due course the powers at present exercised by the Commissioners of the Debt, and who will be at the disposal of the Egyptian Government for all other matters on which they may desire to consult him.

(iv) Egypt will appoint, in concurrence with His Majesty's Government, an official in the Ministry of Justice, who shall enjoy the right of access to the Minister. He shall be kept fully informed on all matters connected with the administration of the law as affecting foreigners, and will also be at the disposal of the Egyptian Government for consultation on any matter connected with the efficient maintenance of law and order.

(v) In view of the contemplated transfer to His Majesty's Government of the rights hitherto exercised under the régime of the Capitulations by the various foreign Governments, Egypt recognizes the right of Great Britain to intervene, through her representative in Egypt, to prevent the application to foreigners of any Egyptian law now requiring foreign consent, and Great Britain on her side undertakes not to exercise this right except in the case of laws operating inequitably against foreigners.

Alternative:—

In view of the contemplated transfer to His Majesty's Government of the rights hitherto exercised under the régime of the Capitulations by the various foreign Governments, Egypt recognizes the right of Great Britain to intervene, through her representative in Egypt, to prevent the application to foreigners of any Egyptian law now requiring foreign consent, and Great Britain on her side undertakes not to exercise this right except in the case of laws inequitably discriminating against foreigners in the matter of taxation, or inconsistent with the principles of legislation common to all the capitulating Powers.

(vi) On account of the special relations between Great Britain and Egypt created by the Alliance, the British representative will be accorded an exceptional position in Egypt and will be entitled to precedence over all other representatives.

- (vii) The engagements of British and other foreign officers and administrative officials, who entered into the service of the Egyptian Government before the coming into force of the Treaty, may be terminated, at the instance of either the officials themselves or the Egyptian Government, at any time within two years after the coming into force of the Treaty. The pension or compensation to be accorded to officials retiring under this provision, in addition to that provided by the existing law, shall be determined by the Treaty. In cases where no advantage is taken of this arrangement existing terms of service will remain unaffected.

5. This Treaty will be submitted to the approval of a Constituent Assembly, but it will not come into force until after the agreements with foreign Powers for the closing of their Consular Courts and the decrees for the reorganization of the Mixed Tribunals have come into operation.

6. This Constituent Assembly will also be charged with the duty of framing a new Organic Statute, in accordance with the provisions of which the Government of Egypt will in future be conducted. This Statute will embody provisions for the Ministers being responsible to the Legislature. It will also provide for religious toleration for all persons and for the due protection of the rights of foreigners.

7. The necessary modifications in the régime of the Capitulations will be secured by agreements to be concluded by Great Britain with the various capitulatory Powers. These agreements will provide for the closing of the foreign Consular Courts, so as to render possible the reorganization and extension of the jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals and the application to all foreigners in Egypt of the legislation (including legislation imposing taxation) enacted by the Egyptian Legislature.

8. These agreements will provide for the transfer to His Majesty's Government of the rights previously exercised under the régime of the Capitulations by the various foreign Governments. They will also contain stipulations to the following effect:

- (a) No attempt will be made to discriminate against the nationals of a Power which agrees to close its Consular Courts, and such nationals shall enjoy in Egypt the same treatment as British subjects.
- (b) The Egyptian Nationality Law will be founded on the *jus sanguinis*, so that the children born in Egypt of a foreigner will

enjoy the nationality of their father, and will not be claimed as Egyptian subjects.

- (c) Consular officers of the foreign Powers shall be accorded by Egypt the same status as foreign Consuls enjoy in England.
- (d) Existing Treaties and Conventions to which Egypt is a party on matters of commerce and navigation, including postal and telegraphic Conventions, will remain in force. Pending the conclusion of special agreements to which she is a party, Egypt will apply the Treaties in force between Great Britain and the foreign Power concerned on questions affected by the closing of the Consular Courts, such as extradition Treaties, Treaties for the surrender of seamen deserters, etc., as also Treaties of a political nature, whether multilateral or bilateral, e. g., arbitration Conventions and the various Conventions relating to the conduct of hostilities.
- (e) The liberty to maintain schools and to teach the language of the foreign country concerned will be guaranteed, provided that such schools are subject in all respects to the laws applicable generally to European schools in Egypt.
- (f) The liberty to maintain or organize religious and charitable foundations, such as hospitals, etc., will also be guaranteed.

The Treaties will also provide for the necessary changes in the Commission of the Debt and the elimination of the international element in the Alexandria Board of Health.

9. The legislation rendered necessary by the aforesaid agreements between Great Britain and the foreign Powers, will be effected by decrees to be issued by the Egyptian Government.

A decree shall be enacted at the same time validating all measures, legislative, administrative or judicial, taken under Martial Law.

10. The decrees for the reorganization of the Mixed Tribunals will provide for conferring upon these Tribunals all jurisdiction hitherto exercised by the foreign Consular Courts, while leaving the jurisdiction of the Native Courts untouched.

11. After the coming into force of the Treaty referred to in Article 3, Great Britain will communicate its terms to foreign Powers and will support an application by Egypt for admission as a member of the League of Nations.

ANNEX II

**MEMORANDUM OF CLAUSES OF SUGGESTED CONVENTION BETWEEN
GREAT BRITAIN AND EGYPT, HANDED BY THE MARQUIS
CURZON OF KEDLESTON TO ADLY PASHA YEGHEN
ON NOVEMBER 10, 1921**

I. TERMINATION OF PROTECTORATE

1. The Government of His Britannic Majesty agree, in consideration of the conclusion and ratification of the present treaty, to terminate the Protectorate declared over Egypt on the 18th December, 1914, and thenceforth to recognize Egypt as a sovereign State under a constitutional monarchy.

There is hereby concluded, and there shall henceforth subsist, between the Government and people of His Britannic Majesty on the one hand, and the Government and people of Egypt on the other hand, a perpetual treaty, and bond of peace, amity and alliance.

II. FOREIGN RELATIONS

2. The foreign affairs of Egypt shall be conducted by the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs under a Minister so designated.

3. His Britannic Majesty's Government shall be represented in Egypt by a High Commissioner, who, in virtue of his special responsibilities, shall at all times be entitled to an exceptional position, and shall take precedence over the representatives of other countries.

4. The Egyptian Government shall be represented in London, and in any other capital in which, in the opinion of the Egyptian Government, Egyptian interests may require such representation, by diplomatic representatives enjoying the rank and title of Minister.

5. In view of the obligations which Great Britain has undertaken in Egypt, notably in respect of foreign countries, the closest relations shall exist between the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the British High Commissioner, who will render all possible assistance to the Egyptian Government in respect of diplomatic transactions or negotiations.

6. The Egyptian Government will not enter into any political agreement with foreign Powers without consultation with His Britannic Majesty's Government through the British High Commissioner.

7. The Egyptian Government will enjoy the right of appointing such consular representatives abroad as their interests may require.

8. For the general conduct of diplomatic relations, and the consular protection of Egyptian interests in places where no Egyptian diplomatic or consular representatives is stationed, His Britannic Majesty's representatives will place themselves at the disposal of the Egyptian Government, and will render them every assistance in their power.

9. His Britannic Majesty's Government will continue to conduct the negotiations for the abolition of the existing Capitulations with the various capitulatory Powers, and accept the responsibility for protecting the legitimate interests of foreigners in

Egypt. His Majesty's Government will confer with the Egyptian Government before formally concluding these negotiations.

III. MILITARY DISPOSITIONS

10. Great Britain undertakes to support Egypt in the defense of her vital interests and of the integrity of her territory.

For the discharge of these obligations and for the due protection of British Imperial communications, British forces shall have free passage through Egypt, and shall be maintained at such places in Egypt and for such periods as shall from time to time be determined. They shall also at all times have facilities as at present for the acquisition and use of barracks, exercise grounds, aerodromes, naval yards and naval harbors.

IV. EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN OFFICERS

11. In view of the special responsibilities assumed by Great Britain and of the existing position in the Egyptian army and public services, the Egyptian Government undertake not to appoint any foreign officers or officials to any of those services without the previous concurrence of the British High Commissioner.

V. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

12. The Egyptian Government will appoint, in consultation with His Britannic Majesty's Government, a Financial Commissioner, to whom shall be entrusted in due course the powers at present exercised by the Commissioners of the Debt, and who will more especially be responsible for the punctual payment of the following charges:

(i) The charges for the budget of the Mixed Courts.

(ii) All pensions or other annuities payable to retired foreign officials and their heirs.

(iii) The budgets of the Financial and Judicial Commissioners and their respective staffs.

13. For the proper discharge of his duties the Financial Commissioner shall be kept fully informed on all matters within the purview of the Ministry of Finance, and shall at all times enjoy the right of access to the President of the Council of Ministers and to the Minister of Finance.

14. No external loan shall be raised nor the revenue of any public service be assigned by the Egyptian Government without the concurrence of the Financial Commissioner.

VI. JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

15. The Egyptian Government will appoint, in agreement with His Britannic Majesty's Government, a Judicial Commissioner, who, in virtue of the obligations assumed by Great Britain, shall be

charged with the duty of watching the administration of the law in all matters affecting foreigners.

16. For the proper discharge of his duties, the Judicial Commissioner shall be kept fully informed on all matters affecting foreigners which concern the Ministries of Justice and of the Interior, and shall at all times enjoy the right of access to the Egyptian Ministers of Justice and of the Interior.

VII. SOUDAN

17. The peaceful development of the Soudan being essential to the security of Egypt and for the maintenance of her water supply, Egypt undertakes to continue to afford the Soudan Government the same military assistance as in the past, or, in lieu thereof, to provide the Soudan Government with financial assistance to an extent to be agreed upon between the two Governments.

All Egyptian forces in the Soudan shall be under the orders of the Governor-General.

Great Britain further undertakes to secure for Egypt her fair share of the waters of the Nile, and to this end it is agreed that no new irrigation works on the Nile or its tributaries south of the Wadi Halfa shall be undertaken without the concurrence of a Board of three conservators representing Egypt, the Soudan and Uganda respectively.

VIII. TRIBUTE LOANS

18. The sums which the Khedives of Egypt have from time to time undertaken to pay over to the houses by which the Turkish loans secured on the Egyptian tribute were issued, will be applied as heretofore by the Egyptian Government to the interest and sinking funds of the loans of 1894 and 1891 until the final extinction of those loans.

The Egyptian Government will also continue to apply the sum hitherto paid towards the interest of the guaranteed loan of 1855.

Upon the extinction of these loans of 1894, 1891, and 1855, all liability on the part of the Egyptian Government arising out of the tribute formerly paid by Egypt to Turkey will cease.

IX. RETIREMENT AND COMPENSATION OF OFFICIALS

19. The Egyptian Government shall be entitled to dispense with the services of British officials at any time after the coming into force of this treaty on condition that such officials shall receive monetary indemnity to which their conditions of service may entitle them.

On the like condition British officials shall be entitled to resign at any time after the coming into force of this treaty.

The scheme shall apply to pensionable and non-pensionable officials as well as to employees of municipalities, provincial councils or other local bodies.

20. An official dismissed or retiring under the terms of the preceding clause shall receive in addition to compensation a repatriation allowance sufficient to cover the cost of transporting himself, his family and his household goods to London.

21. Compensation and pensions shall be payable in Egyptian pounds at the fixed rate of 97½ piastres to the pound sterling.

22. A table of compensation, (a) for permanent officials, (b) for temporary officials, shall be prepared by the president of the Society of Actuaries.